

# Scripps National Spelling Bee 2017: championship finals – as it happened

Updated 10h ago

Fresno sixth-grader staves off marathon challenge by Rohan Rajeev  
Vinay becomes first solo national spelling bee champion since 2013



**Bryan Armen Graham**

Friday 2 June 2017 00.01 EDT

## Key events

20h ago 23:30 Ananya Vinay wins the Scripps National Spelling Bee!

22h ago 21:43 ELIMINATED: Alex Iyer (savate), seven spellers left

21h ago 22:49 ELIMINATED: Mira Dedhia (ehretia), two spellers left

21h ago 22:46 ELIMINATED: Shourav Dasari (Struldbrug), three spellers left

21h ago 22:24 ELIMINATED: Raksheet Kota (oedemerid), four spellers left

22h ago 22:21 ELIMINATED: Tejas Muthusamy (saussurite), five spellers left

22h ago 21:47 ELIMINATED: Shruthika Padhy (quintain), six spellers left

## Live feed

20h ago 00:01

**That's all for now.** Thanks as always for following along with us and be sure to check out the full report off tonight's bee here.

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20h ago 23:30

## Ananya Vinay wins the Scripps National Spelling Bee!

Ananya Vinay's championship word is **marocain**, a dress fabric made from silk or rayon. The 12-year-old sixth-grader from Fresno steps up to the mic: M-A-R-O-C-A-I-N. And she nails it and has won the 90th Scripps National Spelling Bee!

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20h ago 23:28

Rohan spells **poulaine** correctly, but Ananya answers with **Hypapante**. But then Rohan is given **marram** and a look of worry immediately crosses his face. He misspells it! Oh dear! And then Ananya follows up with a correct spelling of **gifblaar**! That means she will be given one championship word that she must spell to be crowned the champion.



Rohan Rajeev blinked first in a marathon championship-round showdown with Ananya Vinay. Photograph: Manuel Balce Ceneta/AP

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20h ago 23:24

OK, now this is getting absurd. Rohan spells **cheiopompholyx**, which is a type of skin disease. Ananya, who is in sixth grade, is given **wayzgoose**, which sounds like an iPhone app but is really a printers' annual outing. That completes the 18th round of the potential 25 championship rounds. If they both make it through seven more words without a mistake, the judges will go to the results of a tie-breaker test that both took before tonight's telecast.

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21h ago 23:21

No indication that either of these two are going to blink. Rohan nails **Naassene** (a Gnostic sect which worships the serpent) and **potichimanie** (the art of imitating painted porcelain ware), while **Ananya** delivers on **gesith** (a wellborn companion or attendant) and **Tchefuncte** (relating to an ancient culture of Louisiana).

Tchefuncte!

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21h ago 23:17

Our two remaining spellers continue to make a mockery of these so-called championship round words. Rohan has just correctly spelled **Brabançon**, **rastacouère** and **emphyteusis**, while Ananya hit on **zeaxanthin**, **Boyg** and **cecidomyia**. Yes, these are really words. For three straight years we've had co-champions at the Scripps National Spelling Bee after more than 50 years since the previous tie. Could we be looking at a fourth?

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21h ago 23:11

Rohan is given **durchkomponiert**, a word meaning having an individual musical setting. And he nails it. Holy hell. Now it's Ananya's turn. Her word is **sceloporus**, any of a genus of small iguanid lizards. And, surprise, she delivers.

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21h ago 23:10

We're into the 11th of 25 championship rounds. Rohan nails **Juglar**, a business cycle of approximately nine years. Then Ananya sticks **gwyniad**, a fish related to the lake whitefish.

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21h ago 23:09

Both spellers plow through two more rounds. They're working so quickly and confidently it's hard to keep up with them. Rohan spelled **chitarrino** (a small guitar) and **koleroga** (disease of an areca palm caused by a fungus), while Ananya delivered on **pykrete** (a frozen mix of water and wood pulp) and **berghaan** (a short-tailed African eagle).

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21h ago 23:04

Rohan gets **epirrHEMA**, an address usually about public affairs. Sticks it. Ananya fields **staatenbund**, a type of league of states. Nails it.

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21h ago 23:02

Rohan is given the word **voussoir**, a tapering piece forming an arch, and he runs through it without a problem. Now another toughie for Ananya: **heilighenschein**, a bright light around shadow of person's head. Oh this could be tough. But ... she nails it! What! Heilighenschein! Unreal stuff.

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21h ago 23:00

Rajeev nails the word **barasingha**, which is large yellowish brown deer. Now a tough one for Ananya: **konditorei**, a shop selling confectionery. She's asking far more questions than we've been

accustomed to hearing from her, but when she gets to spelling she nails it.

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21h ago 22:58

Rohan Rajeev nails **psophometer**, a device for measuring the volume of noise. But Ananya, still working quickly, spells the word **aracari** (a colored tropical American toucan) with speed and accuracy. Perfect!

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Rohan is pitched a bit of a screwball with **konohiki**, the overseer of a Hawaiian land division. A look of confusion betrays his visage. O or A in the middle? Oh dear, the tension! It's *unbearable*! He steps up: K-O-N-O-H-I-K-I. Nails it! But Ananya wastes no time in response, rattling off the spelling of **tasajillo**, a arborescent prickly pear, to put the pressure back on Rohan.

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Rohan with a flawless spelling of **siddur**, a Jewish prayer book. Then Ananya, working quickly, nails the spelling of **cavaquinho**, a Brazilian stringed musical instrument.

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Rohan is back and he sticks **Bandkeramik**, a word for European Neolithic pottery. Then Ananya nails **gargouillade**, a word for a forward leap in ballet. They're sure not wasting any time!

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21h ago 22:51

Rohan Rajeev nails **Egeria** (a female adviser or companion) and Ananya Vinay responds with **cuivre** (overblown; used as a direction in music). There's an undeniable sense these two could tangle all night.

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21h ago 22:49

## **ELIMINATED: Mira Dedhia (ehretia), two spellers left**

Mira is given the word **ehretia**, a plant with white flowers and fleshy drupes. And she biffs it! Oh no! Only two left!

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The sixth-grader Ananya Vinay calmly spells **Dasein**, which means factual reality or existence, and we're going to head to the championship word list with only three spellers remaining!

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21h ago 22:46

## ELIMINATED: Shourav Dasari (Struldbrug), three spellers left

Shourav, a 14-year-old eighth-grader from Texas, is given the word **Struldbrug**, imaginary persons who can never die. He probes Dr Bailly for information then steps to the mic: S-T-R-O-U-L-D-B-R-U-G. Oh dear! The O's done him in! The clubhouse favorite is shockingly out of the competition!

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Rohan Rajeev spells the word **ressentiment**, which is a deep-seated resentment. And you have to wonder if there is any way of tripping these competitors up!

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Mira Dedhia starts off the 15th round with the word **phycoerythrin**, which are red protein pigments in cells of red algae. Nails it! My gosh. How does she do it! She's handled all different types of roots in this competition: French, Dutch, Persian, Greek. You name it. She's never missed a word on stage in her two years of bees in 16 possible tries.

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21h ago 22:40

Ananya Vinay, a sixth-grader from Fresno and the youngest left in the field, spells the word **nuraghe**, a large stone structure of Sardinia. Another perfect round. Four spellers remain.

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21h ago 22:38

Rohan Rajeev is back and the word is **mollienisia**, a genus of fish highly valued in aquariums. Spells it without pause. Now it's Shourav Dasari, who is tasked with **korrigan** (a nocturnal Breton fairy sorceress) and after a bit of probing spells it flawlessly. That will leave Ananya Vinay to finish up the round ...

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Mira Dedhia is back to the stage again to kick off the 14th round. The eighth-grader from Illinois is given the word **spiegeleisen**, a variety of pig iron. It's made up of a Latin-derived German element plus a German element. German is crucial, here. Spelled exactly how it sounds in German. Can she stick it? She starts: S-P-I-E-G-E-L-E-I-S-E-N. Perfect!

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Round 13, the hard-luck number. But not so for Mira Dedhia, who nails **khatun**, a woman of rank in Muslim countries. Then Rohan Rajeev hits on **fauxbourdon**, a sacred choral composition. That

sets the stage for Shourav Dasari, the showboat who took only five seconds last round, who needs nearly the entire two minutes to spell **Ubaid**, a proper noun relating to an early Bronze Age culture. And then Ananya Vinay easily spells the word **dhyana**, a word meaning meditation. Four for four, another perfect round. On to round 14 we go ...

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Rohan Rajeev is given **rinkafadda**, an Irish dance resembling the Virginia reel, and he nails it. Then Shourav Dasari is given **Mogollon** (relating to ancient culture of New Mexico) and needs all of five seconds to rattle it off without asking for any information. A statement-making spell, that! Then Ananya Vinay finishes up the round with a correct spell of **arribada**, a synchronized nesting of sea turtles. Another round down but only four spellers left. Squeaky bum time in our nation's capital!

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21h ago 22:24

## **ELIMINATED: Raksheet Kota (oedemerid), four spellers left**

Raksheet, the eighth-grader from Houston, is tasked with **oedemerid**, a soft-bodied beetle, and he misses the opening O! Oh no!

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## **ELIMINATED: Tejas Muthusamy (saussurite), five spellers left**

Tejas, the 14-year-old Virginian, steps up to spell **saussurite**, a mineral consisting of a tough compact substance that is white, greenish, or grayish. And he misses on the double S! Oh no! A moment of profound disappointment for the eighth-grader as he walks away from the mic amid a standing ovation from the gallery. That was the first miss in what seems like an hour.

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Mira Dedhia, the eighth-grader from Illinois, steps up and her word is **tohubohu**, a word meaning chaos or confusion. Immediate recognition, bodes well. She nails it calmly.

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22h ago 22:15

Three more spellers, three more words, three more survivors. First Rohan Rajeev spells **causee**, then Shourav Dasari nails **aepyornis**, then Ananya Vinay spectacularly hits on **phthirophagous**. Back-to-back perfect rounds means we've (still) got six spellers left entering the 12th round, where apparently the difficulty will be ramped up. Because surely lay-ups like *phthirophagous* are borderline condescending.

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22h ago 22:11

Houston's Raksheet Kota is given the word **bautta**, a word from Latin-derived Italian meaning a black cloak with hood that masks the face. He steps up and spells it slowly but confidently: B-A-U-T-T-A. Nails it!

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22h ago 22:09

Tejas is back and his word is **melainotype**, a positive photograph made by a collodion process on a thin iron plate having a darkened surface. He goes through all the info and nails the word. Next!

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22h ago 22:07

Mira begins the 11th round with **euphroe**, a device used to adjust the tension of a guy rope on a tent. She seems to immediately know the word's Dutch origins, which bodes well. Steps up and nails it calmly. She's never misspelled on stage in her two years at the bee.

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22h ago 22:03

Sixth-grader Ananya Vinay is given **apagoge**, which is a type of syllogism. She doesn't waste any time and spells it perfectly, marking the end of round 10. And it was a perfect round with all six remaining spellers nailing their words. Why do we feel this night is only just beginning?

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